Further information

Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Advisory Group

The Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Advisory Group is a group of stakeholder individuals and organisations assisting the Department of Health with the development and delivery of a programme of work to promote equality and eliminate discrimination for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) people in health and social care (as both service users and employees). The group has four work streams: Reducing Health Inequalities, Better Employment, Improving Services and Transgender Health. The Group has commissioned a number of resources to support the strategy, including:

- *Real Stories, Real Lives: LGBT People and The NHS*: a DVD to be used as a practical tool in training staff and raising awareness;
- *Bereavement: An NHS Guide for Transsexual, Transgender people and their loved ones*; and
- *A guide for young trans people*.

All of these, plus further resources currently under development, can be found on the Department of Health's sexual orientation and gender identity pages at:

www.dh.gov.uk/EqualityAndHumanRights

Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations 1999

The law on employment discrimination (the Sex Discrimination Act, as amended by the Sex Discrimination (Gender Reassignment) Regulations in 1999) defines unlawful discrimination in terms of someone who 'intends to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone gender reassignment'. Gender reassignment is defined within the Act as 'a process which is undertaken under medical supervision for the purpose of reassigning a person's sex by changing physiological or other characteristics of sex, and includes any part of such process'. However, it is important to know that this does not necessarily mean genital surgery. The procedures undertaken when people permanently change their gender role will vary according to the circumstances of the individual, as in any other medical treatment.

Gender Recognition Act 2004

This Act of Parliament gave legal recognition to trans people following a permanent change of gender. It sets out the process for trans individuals to apply for a Gender Recognition Certificate. Once a full Gender Recognition Certificate is issued to a person, their gender henceforth becomes for all purposes the acquired gender (so that, if the acquired gender is the male gender, the person's sex becomes that of a man and, if it is the female gender, the person's sex becomes that of a woman). People with a Gender Recognition Certificate can marry someone of the opposite gender and they can apply for a corrected birth certificate. It also becomes a criminal offence to disclose (without explicit consent) the gender history of someone who has received legal recognition if that information was learned in an official capacity. This means that care professionals should discuss matters with patients if it is clinically desirable to disclose that aspect of their history. Unless there is a clear clinical need for such disclosure, it should be avoided.

Press for Change

Press for Change (PfC) are active members of the Transgender Health work stream and were instrumental in pulling together this introductory resource on transgender issues. They are a non-profit voluntary sector organisation and have a website with a huge range of resources and information on issues relating to trans people. Further information on PfC can be found at:

www.pfc.org.uk

This leaflet was developed by the Department of Health Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Advisory Group's Reducing Health Inequalities work stream, with input from a wide range of transgender people and organisations.

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DH Department of Health

An introduction to working with Transgender people

Information for health and social care staff

To deliver a patient-led NHS, services must be fair to everyone and recognise the needs of each individual. This leaflet is intended to support you to ensure that Transgender people do not experience discrimination and prejudice in service delivery. It is part of a more detailed package of resources to help you to improve the quality and uptake of health and social care services for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender people.

1

About 1 in every 11,500 people in the world are transsexual. Transsexual people feel they belong to the gender opposite to the one assigned to them at birth.

2

Some other people simply cross dress for pleasure or relaxation and do not identify themselves as belonging to the opposite gender. An older term for this is 'transvestism'.

3

Transgender has different meanings. In the UK it is usually an umbrella term for all people who cross gender boundaries, permanently or not. Many prefer the adjective 'trans' for the same thing. Americans use 'transgender' differently. That is why 'trans' is better.

4

Men are as likely as women to be trans/ transgender.

5

Discrimination against transsexual people in employment is illegal. The NHS will treat it with the same seriousness as racism or homophobia.

6

Not all transsexual people are able to or choose to have genital reassignment surgery, yet they can still be legally recognised in their 'new' gender role.

7

Trans people exist in all levels and cultures of society. They contribute as lawyers, doctors, nurses, dentists and builders, and many live ordinary and unremarkable lives without anyone realising their background.

8

The process of transition between genders can involve a period of living in the intended role, hormone therapy and surgeries as appropriate, but not all pathways are the same for trans people.

9

Trans people can have a Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay or straight identity. It is always best to ask in a respectful, supporting way about next of kin without making assumptions.

10

Trans people have the same rights to healthcare as any other member of the community. To deny someone's gender identity, withhold treatment, or subject trans people to discrimination, or disrespect is not acceptable.